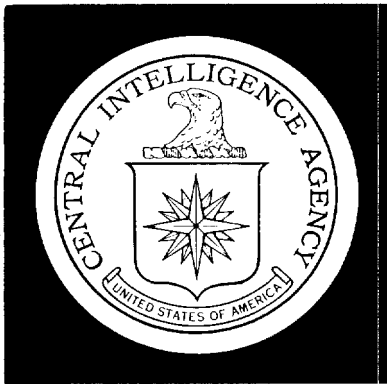


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ITALY-YUGOSLAVIA: Rome responds favorably to overtures for closer military ties.

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ITALY-YUGOSLAVIA: ROME HAS RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO BELGRADE'S OVERTURES TO STRENGTHEN MILITARY RELATIONS.

ACCORDING TO THE YUGOSLAV MILITARY ATTACHE IN ROME, THE ITALIANS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT A TECHNICAL DELEGATION VISIT BELGRADE LATER THIS YEAR TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC AREAS WHERE COOPERATION IS FEASIBLE. THE ATTACHE INDICATED THAT HIS COUNTRY IS INTERESTED IN COPRODUCTION OF ARMAMENTS AND THAT COOPERATION "ON THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL" ALSO IS POSSIBLE.

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BELGRADE'S MOTIVES IN SEEKING SUCH MILITARY TIES IN THE WEST ULTIMATELY REST ON TITO'S REALIZATION, DURING THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA THREE YEARS AGO, OF YUGOSLAVIA'S VULNERABILITY TO SOVIET PRESSURE. ARRANGEMENTS LIKE THE ONE WITH ITALY MITIGATE YUGOSLAV ISOLATION BETWEEN NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT, WITHOUT FORMAL ENTANGLEMENTS THAT WOULD UPSET MOSCOW OR CALL INTO QUESTION YUGOSLAV "NONALIGNMENT." IN ADDITION, BELGRADE IS SEEKING TO EASE ITS ARMS PROCUREMENT PROBLEMS.

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